



Project: deAfDigitAlPlaTform+ ADAPT

IO.5-36 Manual activities videos creation

O5.7- writing of 35 manual activity texts

The History of Sign Language

1. What differentiates people from each other?

People are differentiated by age, physical appearance, gender, culture. Culture is influenced by the geographical area where the person comes from. However, not all people in an era or geographical area are the same. Different groups of people can coexist in a single geographical region depending on their interests or specificities. These specificities determine the emergence of so-called minorities.

2. Discussion about the history of a minority.

Just as a people or a nation has a history of its own, so a minority can have a history separate from most people in that region.

-Explaining the meaning of the word minority: the **minority** refers to a smaller group of people who are distinguished by **certain characteristics** from most of the people.

3. What does sign language mean?/ Who uses sign language?

It is a language of expression through manual signs combined with gestures, facial expressions, words spoken without sounds and body posture. These gestures become a channel of communication.



Project No. 2020-1-RS01-KA201-065366

Sign language, specially designed for deaf people, uses the movement of fingers, lips, body language and gestures to convey a message.

Thanks to sign language, people with disabilities can communicate as easily and efficiently as the rest of the world without any disabilities.

4. The history of sign language from its origins to the present days.

- Presentation in images or video of the most important moments/periods in the appearance and development of sign language

The beginnings of the Christian era

The origin of mimic-gestural language dates back to the beginning of the Christian era, when the positions of the hands and fingers were used to convey the meaning of words.

Native Americans utilized simple hand signs to communicate using

Native Americans utilized simple hand signs to communicate with other tribes and to facilitate trade with Europeans.

Martha's Vineyard Island

Early settlers of Martha's Vineyard, an island off the Massachusetts coast, carried the genes for deafness. Since this island was separated from the mainland, the trait quickly spread among the inhabitants and a large deaf population was established. A regional sign language developed so that the deaf could communicate with each other as well as with the hearing residents.

Monks of early 11th century developed basic gestures to aid essential communication

As early as the 11th century, monks developed basic gestures to aid with essential communication during a vow of silence.

Pedro Ponce de Leon –the first teacher of the deaf

In the 1500s, **Pedro Ponce de Leon**, a Spanish Benedictine monk, adapted these signs to help him educate deaf students in Spain. He is the first recognized teacher of the deaf and his work paved the way for the creation and instruction of a formal sign language. Prior to this, deaf people were persecuted, mistreated, and viewed as being unable to learn or to participate in society.

Juan Pablo Bonet- the first manual alphabet system



In 1620, Juan Pablo Bonet, a Spanish priest, published a book called "The Reduction of Letters and the Art of Teaching the Dumb to Speak." This was considered the first modern treatise on phonetics and speech therapy, which founded oral education for the deaf children.

Charles Michel de l'Eppe- the Father of the Deaf

The hand signs, mentioned in Bonet's book, came to be used to teach deaf-mute people to communicate. Inspired by Bonet's sign language, **Charles-Michel de l'Eppe** published a book containing alphabets in the 18th century. In 1755, he established the original public school for deaf children, the *Institution Nationale des Sourds-Muets à Paris* (National Institute for Deaf-Mutes in Paris). This was the first systematic and organized approach to the education of the deaf and it led to l'Eppe being referred to as the Father of the Deaf. Through her, the l'Eppe wanted to help the deaf to communicate with the rest of the world, using hand gestures and signs. L'Eppe adapted these signs along with a manual alphabet and created a sign language dictionary. This standardized sign language is now referred to as Old French Sign Language and quickly spread across Europe and to the United States.

The Old French Sign Language represents the basis on which the different national sign languages have developed.

American Sign Language

Another important evolution in the history of sign language occurred with the founding of the first American School for the Deaf in Hartford, Connecticut. It was founded by Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet in 1817. Forty years later, in 1857, Gallaudet's son, Edward Miner Gallaudet, founded another school for the deaf in Washington. The school became known as Gallaudet University in 1864. This further strengthened the education of people with hearing impairments.

Sign Language in Europe

According to some statistics, there are somewhere between 500,000 and 900,000 European citizens who communicate through sign language.

Today, there are quite a number of sign languages around the world. Deaf communities around the globe communicate differently, through their own version of sign language.

For example:

- in the UK, "sign language" usually refers to British Sign Language (BSL), the most common sign language, used by around 125,000 people.

For over 87,000 Deaf people, BSL is their first language and English is their second or maybe even third language.



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-in Northern Ireland, Irish Sign Language (ISL) is used as well as BSL.

Since 2003, BSL has been recognised as a language in its own right. It is a complete language, with its own vocabulary, grammar and word order, as well as its own social beliefs, behaviours, art, history and values.

The first group of persons with hearing impairment in Romania was established on November 9, 1919 and was called the Friendly Association of the Deaf-Mute in Romania, under the patronage of Queen Mary, through the voluntary association of a group of deaf. In 2020 the Romanian government officially recognizes Romanian Sign Language as the language used by the minority of people with hearing disabilities.

International Sing Language

Although there is a national sign language for most nations, today there is also an international sign language, which, as the name suggests, is used at international meetings, such as the World Federation of the Deaf, and unofficially, for socializing while traveling.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_sign_language

https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Limba_semnelor

<https://study.com/academy/lesson/the-history-of-sign-language.html>

<https://people.howstuffworks.com/sign-language.htm>

<https://www.sense.org.uk/get-support/information-and-advice/communication/sign-language/>

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